

## **NORTH RICHMOND MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Tuesday, July 7, 2020

515 Silver Avenue - North Richmond, CA 94801

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

### **Minutes**

#### **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. Board members present were: Beverly Scott, Lily Rahnema, Annie King-Meredith, and Dr. Henry Clark. Gilmore and Garcia absent.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

The agenda was reviewed and approved. Minutes were prepared for the last meeting on March 3, 2020. They were not presented at tonight's meeting.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Doug Harris/Local Filmmaker: Doug expresses that he is excited to be present at the NRMAC meeting this evening. He has attended the meetings over the years. Doug makes an announcement about an exciting new photo exhibit project, about NR. It's an interactive photo exhibit about the history of North Richmond. This project consists of excerpts taken from the four award-winning documentaries, (produced by Doug and the Youths of NR, that worked in the Summer Youth Programs).

The exhibit was originally scheduled to be presented at the Richmond Art Museum. Due to CORVID-19, the exhibit was changed to an online experience. Actually Doug feels better about the change. More people have access to the exhibit and can view it at any given time of the day or night.

A trailer of the exhibit is available on YOUTube. The exhibit uses photographs from the four documentary films that were produced, with detailed short video clips about the picture, showing how it was used in the documentaries.

Doug is especially proud of the support that was given to the filming projects over the years. Special thanks to the North Richmond Family Service Center office. A special thanks to Supervisor John Gioia and staff. Doug is proud of the accomplishments of the youth workers. The opportunity to train teenagers to document their communities' history and to become film production crew members. The teens could have been placed in other jobs, for instance, (out picking up the trash or something).

**PUBLIC COMMENT CONTINUED**

Avala LaTeif/NR Resident: Ms. La Teif has a complaint about the major construction project going on at Pittsburg Avenue and the Richmond Parkway. She says that the neighborhood is experiencing major tremors from the construction work. She asks is this the project that the NRMAC approved in 2018? Robert Rogers will look into this and get back to the NRMAC with some answers.

Ms. LaTeif also wants to know if NRMAC has a web site. The answer is yes there is. North Richmond Advisory Council.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY REPORT**

N/A

Dr. Clark says hopefully the law enforcement would join the meeting. Robert says he will expect law enforcement at up-coming meetings.

**PRESENTATIONS and Proclamations**

Kristine Solseng, Planner/CCC Planning Department-Census Outreach:

Update on outreach: The census can shape many different aspects of your community. Health clinics, fire departments, schools, and highways. First and foremost the Census determines Federal funding, at state, and local level. Determines how billions of dollars in federal funding flow into states and communities each year. Determines how many seats in Congress each state gets. If left unaccounted for, there is a loss of funding of \$10,000 for every person that is not counted. Planning, development, and emergency Planning, are affected by the outcome of the Census.

It is mandated by the U.S. Constitution, Article 1 - Section 2 since 1790. Every ten years the United States must count its population.

Cynthia asks about community outreach in the neighborhood. Men and Women of Valor are working directly with the Census. Locally outreach grants were also awarded to :

Urban Tilth Farms, Rich City Rides, and Shield's and Reid Neighborhood Council.

**PRESENTATIONS and Proclamations Continued**

Kristine Solseng, Planner/CCC Planning Department-Census Outreach:

Census started in March should have ended in April, has been extended to July. Starting in August will start doing door knocking. So far Countywide, about 71 percent of households have filled out their census forms. North Richmond is struggling a little in getting the census forms filled out, reporting about 47.9% of households have filled out their Census. N R, Bay Point, and Antioch are behind in filling out the census forms.

Annie has a question about North Richmond residents, participation in the Census. She asks: At this point can you identify what households have turned in the census or have not turned in. Answer: At this point, the collected data is not broken down by address they are going by Census tracts. In August they will have more detailed information. Government employees will step in, and start their, door to door phase of the Census.

Dr. Clark asks about Men and Women of Valor working with the Census. He wants to know if DeJenna Burkes, (who has office space at that organization), is she part of that Census team. Khristine says that Men and Women of Valor are over their own funding. Robert says that the Census count is important, we must get our numbers high.

Daniel Barth, Director of Safe Organized Spaces, (SOS): Presentation on work being performed at the homeless camps, in and around the Richmond Area. An organization that aims to establish safe and secure living situations for unsheltered individuals.

Working under the Chevron Environmental and the Community Investment Agreement Program. NRMAC board member Lilly Rahnema attests to the Chevron program. Richmond Street Team is also sponsored by Tent Makers Inc., a community housing development corporation.

An ample amount of work, time, and effort have been devoted to homelessness and illegal dumping. Has hired homeless people \$15.00 an hour to help clean up trash. Presently eight to nine people are working on the Street Team. The program works to transition homeless encampments into a clean, safe place with intentions of connecting

individuals with resources. Mobile showers and toilets have been brought into the homeless encampments.

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**PRESENTATIONS and Proclamations Continued:**

Daniel Barth, Director SOS Richmond: Trash is the number one disorder in the homeless camps. The main problem is having the trash taken away, once cleaned up. Need to get with public service to work with them. Bishop Santiago, director of REACH International, says she can help out with some trucks to haul off the trash. Another major problem at the homeless encampments is stolen vehicles.

Question is how can we support healthy behavior? Marina appreciates Daniel and the Street Team. Wants to see homeless people from North Richmond, living in one homeless camp. There is a large homeless encampment on Vernon Street in NR. Brookside creeks have large homeless encampments. There are large encampments along all of the railroad tracks. Behind Pic and Pull exist one of the largest homeless encampments.

Dr. Clark asks are the homeless people in NR, formerly displaced residents, or are the people coming into the community from all over. Answer: Lot's of homeless people have trespassing tickets, they shift around following the resources. Oakland and Berkeley had the most resources in the past, now Richmond has access to them.

Kaprice James, NR Activist, and Resident: Kaprice has expressed this issue numerous times. She is a homeowner, residing on Vernon Street. There is an empty-abandoned lot next to her house. This lot is a dumping ground for trash and discarded appliances. There is also a fence on Vernon, with a hole in it, where homeless people trespass thru. Robert has and will continue to assist Kaprice with this existing problem. Property owners have been notified to clean up and secure the property. So far there has been no response from the owners. Further actions will be taken, to rectify the situation.

Questions are presented to the NRMAC about street sweeping. Are they doing their job properly and efficiently? Street sweeping rules for parked cars are not being enforced by the Sheriff's Department.

Dr. Clark has concerns about a fence that runs parallel, between the Parkway and the backside of Battery Street. He thinks the property belongs to Chevron Refinery.

There are holes in that fence and people have access to the NR community, through those gaps in the fence. Lily says that she will look into the property ownership of that fence.

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#### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION**

James Lee, Member of Richmond Chamber of Commerce/Cannabis business

At 703 Chesley Avenue: Mr. Lee presented to the NRMAC on 3,3,2020, about the proposed cannabis business. The location is at the old Rheen building on Chesley.

Backstory: son has depression, and medicinal cannabis has helped him. James learned that many young people struggle with mental illness, and cannabis can be a form of treatment.

Wants to invest \$3 million into this project. \$1 million on build-out. Hope to operate by the end of the year. Will put 5% of profit back into the community, toward mental health initiatives. Will employ 34 people or more. Expect to see profits from business in three years.

This facility will be high tech, the entire building will be gutted out, and refitted. The weed growth operation will be odorless, security guards 24/7 will be provided by Mr. Lee's own private security company.

Annie asks questions about the planned growth operation. Dr. Clark wants to know what will the community gain. Mr. Lee is still sticking to his 5% offering toward mental health initiatives in the community. Annie asks Mr. Lee what mental health services. Will the money go directly to a NR not-profit agency. Mr. Lee says that he prefers that the money goes directly to an NR agency.

Kaprice asked how many employees will there be?

Marena asked, where have you made this presentation? Mr. Lee responds:

This proposed plan has been presented to the Board of Supervisors.

Dr. Henry states that he is totally against this proposed project. Mr. Lee has been invited to come back to the NRMAC in the future, to further discuss the project.

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**OTHER AGENCY/PROGRAM REPORTS**

Carlos Lemus, Project Manager, Resident Leadership/Healthy Richmond:

Reporting on Healthy Richmond Activities. Have been focusing on Las Deltas, meetings with the CCC Housing Authority. Working with RYSE Youth, figuring out exactly what type of services the youth in NR needs. Hope to roll out this plan in October 2020. Doing outreach to the youths, making videos of outreach work and workshops. Conducting surveys around cannabis. Have concerns about warehouses located at Parr and Verde. Concerns about climate action plans.

Annie suggests that Healthy Richmond devise a plan to reach out to Hispanic Families, about not wearing facial masks, during the Corona Pandemic. Carlos says that they have no COVID outreach, they did make face masks, to be given out to seniors. They are seeking funds for undocumented residents. People need relief funds due to job loss. Annie suggests that they focus on people's health during this pandemic.

Robert Rogers, District Coordinator/Supervisor John Gioia's Office: Robert addresses the issue about the Parkway & Pittsburg (Logistic Center). The work that is causing a disturbance to the community should be done within the month. It is not causing any impact on reducing the solidity of the Parkway Estates Homes. No shifting of the home's foundations.

Robert announces about a terrible tragedy in the community. Mark Randle was killed last week. He was the grandson of Mr. Charles Reid, a legend in the NR community.

The mural at Verde is ongoing. Joe Pullido and Chevron are amongst the generous donors, toward the project. This year the 4th of July was different. There was an unusual amount of illegal fireworks activity all throughout the Bay Area.

There is a new testing center for COVID-19, located at Kennedy High School. You are being advised, to please get tested.

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**OTHER AGENCY/PROGRAM REPORTS CONTINUED**

Robert Rogers, District Coordinator/Supervisor John Gioia's Office:

Annie asks about the build-up of trash at the railroad tracks, next to the Chesley Commons Apartment Complex. Where are we at with that? Yes, there is a major illegal dumping problem at that location. Have sent inquiries to the railroad company, so far no response. Will be sending inquiries to the City of Richmond. Annie says if nothing is done, she is going to send footage to the local news station.

Janie Holland, Community Building and Engagement Director/CHDC:

Janie says during this shelter in place, some departments are essential, and are still up and running. CHDC has contacted the city about the trash along the railroad tracks. As of last week, Heritage Point has no vacancies. Healthy Richmond and Urban Tilth have been providing food and resources to the community.

Janie introduces the newly appointed, Community Service Coordinator: Felisa Orozco.

Bishop Edwina Santiago, Director/REACH International Fellowship: Have been going around the neighborhood, giving out masks and gloves. Also going door to door giving out hand sanitizer, produce, meat and chicken. Have been doing property clean up.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

**Next Meeting**

**Tuesday, August 4, 2020**

**5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

**(This will be a zoom meeting due to COVID-19)**

